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AUTHOR Grover, Burton L.; Rice, Robert M.
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ABSTRACT

This learning package is a conservative approach to pupil-teacher planning, the purpose of which is to enable teachers to use this type of planning with students. The package is divided into four tasks. Task 1 states that most students don't realize what it is they should be trying to learn and consequently are not as likely to learn it. It emphasizes that though there are many drawbacks to having teachers decide learning goals, this does not mean that immature students should have sole responsibility for what they learn. Assumptions are outlined that lay the groundwork for procedures that allow students to participate in instructional planning. Task 2 tests the reader's understanding of Task 1. Task 3 outlines the steps used for pupil-teacher planning. Recommendations are made that the unit be somewhat familiar to students, not overly difficult, and one which comes early in the year, so that the planning experience can help later on. It suggests that the teacher first introduce the topic and explain what types of questions are "good" questions. The students might then form small groups and formulate questions for that particular topic. After a list of questions is made, the students should choose those questions they are interested in working on; class time should be provided for this work. At the end of the unit the teacher should evaluate the process with the students. Task 4 includes a test of Task 3, a pupil opinionnaire, and the suggestion that if this process cannot be applied to a whole unit, just one lesson could be used. (PB)

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PUPIL-TEACHER PLANNING: A CONSERVATIVE APPROACH

A Learning Package

by

Burton L. Grover
Robert M. Rice

W.W.S.C.

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Prerequisites

None.

Instructional Objectives

1. After completing Task I the instructional manager, hereafter referred to as the i.m., will have experienced the Introductory, Exploratory, Planning, Learning, and Evaluation Phases of Pupil-Teacher Planning.

2. After completing Task II the i.m. will be able to identity, with 80% accuracy, the assumptions upon wnich Pupil-Teacher Planning is based.

3. After completing Task III the i.m. will be able to list five phases of Pupil-Teacher Planning and write a paragraph defining each.

4. After completing Task IV the i.m. will have demonstrated the ability to use Pupil-Teacher Planning with pupils.

Rationale

It is difficult to attribute the ideas in this learning package to any definite sources. Nevertheless, in some way or another, a good part of this learning package is a reflection (or a distortion) of ideas expressed at various times by Ned Flanders.[1]

This is not a comprehensive review of Pupil-Teacher Planning. It is one (rather conservative) approach that was originally written for teachers who were most experienced with "traditional self-contained" classroom teaching situations. The approach must be adapted to various subject matter areas and to the various age and ability levels of pupils.

Preassessment

Are you familiar with the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process? Have you ever used a pupil-teacher planning process? If you answered "no" to either of the above questions you may gain from this learning package.

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[1] In particular, Ned A. Flanders, "Diagnosing and Utilizing Social Structures in Classroom Learning," in The Dynamics of Instructional Groups, edited by Nelson B. Henry, the 59th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, pp. 187-217, 1960.

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Task I

Introductory Phase

Generally speaking, a person learns better if he has some idea of what it is he is trying to learn. That is, if a person can describe what it is he will know or be able to do after he goes through a learning process, he will be better able to achieve that capability than if he is not able to describe it.

A regrettably frequent deficiency in day-to-day teaching is the failure to have pupils realize what it is they should be trying to learn. They are told to read a chapter, to open or close their books, to collect butterflies, to do an assignment, to review for a test, or to put a problem on the board, but they are rarely told what it is they should learn, it is usually of a very short term variety. "Know the major exports of the Western European countries for the test." "For tomorrow, see if you can figure out how to factor quadratic equations."

Some teachers are good at describing to pupils what it is they should learn. In most cases for most pupils who are compliant to the demands of school will thereby be able to make more sense out of ongoing activities by placing them in the context of learning goals. However, having a teacher tell a pupil what it is he should learn is not an ideal solution. It has certain drawbacks. Among them are these. It increases the pupils' dependency on outside authority figures for deciding what is to be learned, pupils do not learn to think for themselves about what deserves study or how to learn, a goal that is clearly described for one pupil may not be clear to another pupil in the same class, a goal that is appropriate for some pupils may not be appropriate for others in the same class, a pupil may not care about the goal but could become more excited by an equally legitimate but somewhat different goal, and it doesn't exactly help the learner to live in a democratic society and learn democratic decision-making.

Listing the drawbacks of having teachers decide learning goals does not imply that immature pupils should have sole responsibility for deciding what it is they should learn. That leads to all sorts of things that are ripe for parody: spending a week making a New England pot-boiled dinner in social studies, cartoon caption of a pupil speaking, "Do we have to do what we want to do again today," etc. Pupil planning leads to disorganization, unavailability of materials related to goals (what pupil thought of ordering them ahead of time?), sometimes unrealistic plans, and complete ignorance of important possibilities. This latter point is important; pupils studying French will never decide to learn the subjunctive conjugation of verbs if they don't even know that there is a subjunctive form.

The point is that, while complete pupil authority in planning can be disastrous, there are ways that they can <u>participate in</u> planning that have definite advantages over complete teacher dominance or over inattention to learning goals.

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Exploration Phase

At this point if you are familiar with this technique or are not interested in continuing with this learning package, discontinue now. If you are interested in further work on the topic of Pupil-Teacher Planning write a list of from ten to fifteen questions that you have about Pupil-Teacher Planning.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

Planning Phase

Pick five questions that you feel would be most helpful to you in learning about Pupil-Teacher Planning. Combine questions where feasible.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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Learning Phase

Read the following assumptions rapidly, paying particular attention to seeking answers to your questions about Pupil-Teacher Planning.

A number of assumptions can be stated that lay the groundwork for procedures that allow pupils to participate in instructional planning.

1. Whenever a person is supposed to be engaged in some learning behavior, the capability that marks the acceptable endpoint of that behavior can be termed a goal.

There are all sorts of logical difficult with this statement--its circularity and use of terms like "supposed to" and "acceptable"--and this probably is why learning psychologists do not talk about goals much anymore. Nevertheless, it will serve as a starting point.

2. How a person reacts to a learning activity is determined to a large extent by his perception of the goal of the activity, as well as competing goals.

This assumption enables us to consider the question of motivation in conjunction with learning goals and learning behavior.

3. There are two main attributes of a person's goal perception, its clarity and its "valence" (or attraction); goals can be clear or unclear and they can be positive, neutral, or negative in attraction.

It is helpful to consider both attributes as distinct attributes, even though they do interact and affect one another (a goal may become more positive--or negative--as it is perceived more clearly, for instance). There are, it is proposed, definite relationships between goal clarity and goal attraction on the one hand and how a person behaves and what he learns on the other.

4. Most of the time in conventional classroom instruction, approved learning goals are perceived as unclear and of neutral valence by most learners.

Pupils generally are rather compliant and passive as to what is to be attempted in the classroom, and their relatively neutral attitude is nurtured by the school for the sake of necessary order and organization. This generalization does not hold true all of the time nor for alienated youth nor in many lower class situations. When goals become clearer and take on a positive or negative valence, then things can become more volatile, pupils usually have more definite attitudes regarding extrinsic grades rather than learning goals, and learning goals, if considered at all, are often considered a means to the end of good grades. The fact that attitudes toward goals are usually neutral, while

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not something to brag about, allows considerable flexibility in what teachers can do and how they can bring pupils into planning; in situations where school-imposed learning goals have negative (repelling) valence for learners, there is usually less flexibility available to the teacher, and coercion becomes more a part of the picture. Pupil-teacher planning may be next to impossible when goals are very negative unless managed by a very exceptional teacher.

5. Most subject matter is structured in such a way (or is hardly structured at all) that there is a certain inherent flexibility in what learning goals can be set and still be acceptable.

Occasionally, subject matter is sequenced in such a way that pupils must learn a definite thing before they can proceed; addition facts must be learned at a certain time before more math is to be studied, for instance. However, in most cases learning goals can be adjusted to a certain extent to accommodate the learner without making the goal any less valuable in terms of criteria established by our society. Social studies has greater flexibility in this regard and math perhaps has the least. Whether the history students should devote more energy to studying the unification of Germany or British imperialism is a moot question. Even in math, whether a student should attempt any of several areas, such as topology, can be decided by individual learners as well as anyone, for generally accepted and recognized criteria for making this decision do not exist.

6. When a person has freedom and encouragement to determine or modify learning goals, he will tend to shift towards goals that have a more positive valence or attraction.

This statement is pretty circular; it simply says that a person will try to do what he wants to do, if he has the chance.

7. The higher valence a goal has, the more energy a person will expend to reach it.

This is also practically a tautology, one that makes the motivational angle more explicit.

8. When a person has freedom and encouragement to determine or modify learning goals, he will tend to restate them in ways that are more clear to him; goal clarity is thereby increased.

There is something in common here with the translation type of question, "put it in your own words."

9. The clearer a goal is for a person, the more he will know of the steps required (intermediate goals) to reach it.

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When a learner knows the steps required to reach a goal, he needs less external assistance. He is less dependent upon others for step-by-step instructions. His requests for assistance can be more specific and efficient. If a goal is both clear and of positive attraction, he is in a good position to engage in independent study.

10. When learners begin with unclear, neutral goals, in situations where goals have some flexibility, greater social access, that is a greater chance for dialogue with the teachers and other learners, provides great possibility of modifying goals to a clear, positive state.

Manipulation of "social access" is a major tool of a skillful teacher. It can be increased at most any time by lessening the dominance of the teacher and encouragement of pupil participation. It can be manipulated by the choice of activities. Setting up small group discussions is one way of sharply increasing social access. Assigning seatwork along with strictures for silence can sharply decrease social access. When the skillful teacher perceives that pupil goal-setting would be advantageous and not get out of control, i.e., when the "valence" of the general learning situation is not so negative that freedom to set goals will lead to a radical shift to (socially) unacceptable goals, he can increase social access in the classroom to facilitate the learner goal-setting process. This assumption is the key to the procedures described in Part II.

11. There is a greater tendency for pupils to do their own goal-setting on occasions when teachers lessen their authority and dominance.

Lowering one's authority as a teacher will not cause pupil goal-setting by itself, but it will help if combined with other factors. Having small group activity is one way of both lowering teacher dominance and increasing social access. If learners cannot depend on the teacher to set their goals, they have to do it themselves.

To this point the assumptions have dealt with three concepts, social access, teacher dominance, and goal perception, that make up much of the theory upon which Pupil-Teacher Planning is based. If you wish to spend more time thinking about these concepts before you proceed through this package, try to answer the following questions. If you do not feel a need to do this, simply proceed to assumption 12 on page 9.

Some of these questions are not merely knowledge level, but they nevertheless can serve as a method for better understanding of the concepts. See page 8 for the answers to these questions.

1. What are two major attributes of goal perception?

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2. According to the previous reading, how many possibilities are there for the state of goal perception?

3. Using the idea that there are six possible goal perception conditions, two teacher dominance conditions (high and low), and two social access conditions (high and low), possible for a classroom at any one time, how many possible combinations of these conditions are possible for a classroom?

4. Some combinations of conditions are probably more stable than others. Some combinations, if they existed, probably would change quickly. Would you regard this as a stable classroom condition?

   a) Clear, negative goals, low teacher dominance and high social access?

   b) Clear positive goals, high teacher dominance and low social access?

5. If goals were negative and unclear and teacher dominance low, what likely would happen to social access?

6. If goals are negative and clear and social access high, what happens to teacher dominance?

7. Name some things that a teacher might do in a classroom to increase social access.

8. List some things that a teacher might do to decrease social access.

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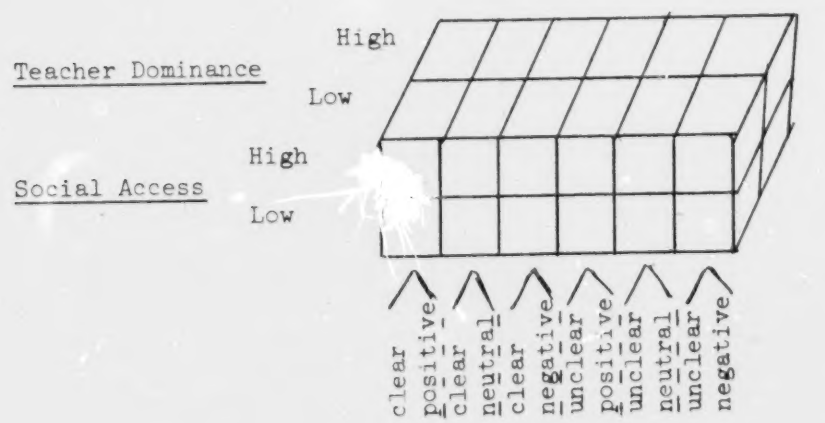
Answers to Questions on Pages 7-8

1. Clarity--clear or unclear
   Valence--positive, neutral, or negative

2. Six.

		Valence		
		Positive	Neutral	Negative
Clarity	Clear			
	Unclear			

3. Twenty-four.



4a. Probably not. The teacher may become high in dominance to control pupil behavior by reducing social access. For a longer range solution, look at changing the valence of goals.

4b. Probably stable as long as the goals are positive. This is considered a model classroom by some and undesirable by others because it does not foster self-directed learning and may increase dependence on authority.

5. Increases.

6. Increases.

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7. Buzz sessions
   Group projects
   Cross age tutoring
   Classroom meetings
   Leave the room

8. Seat work
   Seat alphabetically
   Less discussions
   Reduce discussions to teacher-pupil talk
   Rant and rave (maybe)
   Etc.

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12. Goal setting is question-asking.

At least it can be. When a person seriously asks a question for which he desires an answer, that is one form of goal-setting. Most legitimate learning goals can be stated in the form of a question: "to be able to identify 14 varieties of sparrows in their natural habitat" could be rephrased as "What are the differences among sparrows?" or more generally "How can I become a better bird-watcher and get away with it?"

13. The more one already knows about general area of the subject matter to be studied, the better able he is to perceive and formulate clear and positive learning goals.

Again, one will not set a learning goal about subjunctive conjugations of French verbs if he does not know that that tense exists. A learner cannot make a good choice between studying the French Revolution or the Russian Revolution if he knows nothing about either. One of the big problems of pupil-teacher planning is simply that the teacher knows more than the learner--and is aware of many more possibilities of what could be learned. This means that for pupil goal-setting to be successful the teacher will often still have to introduce and give an overview of the subject matter and perhaps have some introductory exercises before serious goal-setting occurs. There will also be a need for readjusting goals as the learners progress through the initial steps and learn more about the subject at hand.

14. The learner's initial knowledge of the subject matter and his ability to formulate valid learning goals about it is enhanced by preliminary fooling around with related things--ideas, objects, readings, pictures, maps, puzzles, etc.

This statement is a wild extrapolation from some experimental work of E. Paul Torrance where performance on product improvement or "toy dog" tests was enhanced by preliminary play with the test object. Wild extrapolation or not, it seems to make some sense; preliminary exploration and "play" with ideas or objects associated with the general task should increase familiarity and clues about what to do next.

15. It is possible for a teacher to set goals for pupils, but only on rare occasions will they be as clear to the learners as they would be if the learners set them themselves.

There is a logic of instruction imposed by the subject matter, about which the teacher is better versed, and there is a logic imposed by the readiness and experience of the learner, about which the learner himself is most expert. The two logics can contradict in their implication for instruction, and a job of pupil-teacher planning is to reconcile these contradictions as best as possible. Pupil participation in goal-setting can usually represent the logic of the learner's readiness better than if the teacher tried to do it, particularly when the teacher also represents

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the logic of the subject matter. Sometimes a teacher-set goal can hit the learner's attitudes and readiness right on the nose, but even if it does do this for one or a few persons in the classroom, it will not do so for other learners--unless the teacher tries to individualize according to his judgment and is fantastically lucky or omnipotent enough to go 30 for 30.

16. <u>There is a direct relationship between the amount and variety of relevant materials available and the degree to which learning goals can be modified and still be attainable.</u>

One cannot learn much about Shakespeare without copies of his plays; one cannot study Hittite culture without some sources beside a usual text and a set of junior encyclopedias; a class cannot easily evaluate the UN Charter if there is only one copy; and a learner can't conduct a conditioning experiment on a rat without the rat. The more varied materials that are available--in sufficient numbers or in a way that can easily be presented--the greater the flexibility that exists for variation in learning goals. Core curriculum died from multiple causes, probably, and the problem of organizing material was one of them; the core people never quite licked it satisfactorily.

17. <u>Because of the availability of materials, the structure of the subject matter, the possibility of wildly unrealistic goals, the usual need to keep some continuity and relatedness to classroom activities, and what society dictates as valid goals, the teacher has to delimit the area within which learners set their goals.</u>

The teacher, usually a more knowledgeable and mature person than the learners, has to keep learner-set goals within bounds lest they become too unrealistic, too banal, or too unacceptable. (Too often teachers will keep them too much within bounds, or rather, within too narrow bounds.) This need not be done in a formal way but can be accomplished by informal discussion and verbal guidance.

18. <u>If learners set their goals, not only will they move them to goals which have more positive valence, but the very act of goal-setting might also increase a learner's motivation.</u>

Don't bet too much money on this assertion--but it isn't really necessary because we have already taken care of pupil motivation in #6 and #7.

19. <u>Pupils' ability to ask good questions about the subject matter (that is, to set goals) will increase with experience.</u>

When one asks pupils to ask major study questions for the first time, he shouldn't be surprised with responses like "what is the capital of Ohio?" "What are the major resources of Brazil?" "I don't know what

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you want us to do," "What is weather?" "Can we take a field trip to Tacoma?" and "What's nuclear physics all about?" Learners aren't used to setting their own goals, and they often will copy memory-level textbook type questions or wander into confused flights of abstract uncertainty and irrelevancy. Learning to ask better questions, questions that lead to a deeper understanding of the subject matter and an integration with other learnings, is something that usually has to be taught. This can be done by examples, questions and criticism after first attempts at question-formulation, and asking for second and third attempts at the process. It can also be taught by making provisions for modification of the questions as learning behavior proceeds.

20. Pupils' performance in setting goals (asking questions) will be enhanced to the extent that there is (a) corrective feedback from the teacher and (b) opportunity to readjust goals as learning proceeds.

In order for pupils to realize that "What is the capital of Ohio?" type of question will not suffice for the whole unit, the teacher must point out the limitation and superficiality of this question and suggest more penetrating alternatives. Initial activities designed for goal-setting should be followed by discussion and other activities designed to evaluate and change initial goals. Even then the question might not serve too well, and end-of-unit discussions examining the whole process may be needed so that a better job can be done the next time it is tried.

21. Pupils' ability to ask good questions (set good goals) will be enhanced if they understand the various levels of a cognitive taxonomy.[1]

Asking the question "Of what practical use is the imaginary number 'i'?" is more likely if the person is aware of the application category. "How can the study of the presidency help a person decide who is today's best candidate?" is more likely to occur if one knows the evaluation category.

22. Pupils' ability to ask questions will be enhanced if they have practice in formulating criteria for acceptable answers or behavior in response to the question.

Thinking about criteria for acceptable behavior a la Mager forces one to have a better understanding of the question he is asking. This is a refinement that perhaps should not be attempted the first time pupil-teacher planning is used.

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[1]The reader might study Norris Sanders' Classroom Questions: What Kinds (New York: Harper and Row, Inc., 1966), for a practical exposition of a cognitive taxonomy. It is speculated here that many pupils from upper elementary up can understand the levels themselves with proper instruction.

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23. There is a greater chance that desirable affective goals will be achieved by learners if they do the setting of the related cognitive goals.

Participation usually increases personal commitment--because of greater ego-involvement or something. The major basis for this contention is Lewin's World War II studies on eating meat and other studies which have indicated that attitudes shift more when participation is greater, as in discussion or role-playing, than from a teacher-exposition approach.

24. Within the usual classroom situation, more individualization of instruction can occur (but not necessarily will occur) with learner goal-setting than without it.

As each learner sets his goals he is able to be more independent in planning the steps to reach the goals. Consequently, he is able to concentrate on adjusting the steps to his individual goal and capability. It is almost impossible for the teacher to make these individual adjustments for all his pupils.

25. Certain teacher characteristics are necessary conditions for clear, positive, acceptable, and realistic goal-setting by the pupils.

Besides the teacher's willingness to try this approach, the key teacher characteristics revolve around his perceptual abilities: perception of pupil willingness to set goals, perception of need for modifying initial goals, perception of the presence of volatile and negative valence situations that call for lower social access and temporary abandonment of free pupil goal-setting, perception of already existing pupil goal structures, and perception of the inherent flexibility in the subject matter and available materials. Other important characteristics are tolerance for different value systems, ability to explain and sell goal-setting, and ability to consciously manipulate social access and his own leadership strength or dominance.

26. Continued success in learner goal-setting is partly dependent upon adjustments of grading to the goal-setting process.

Unless an adjustment of grading is done, pupils will conclude correctly that the school and the teacher do not take the process seriously and that it is to be considered merely a frill. This will occur if pupils go in somewhat different directions in pursuit of their goals, and yet are graded on the basis of the same standard in the form of a single test, particularly one that does not take into consideration what different pupils studied on their own. A vote of confidence in learner goal-setting occurs when a major portion of one's grade is based on the quality and number of goals attained and also the number of "good shows" made in trying but failing to reach other goals. This involves even more subjective elements in grading by the teacher (or by teacher and learners combined) than is usually the case, because of the need to judge the quality of different goals set and weigh them accordingly. But that's life.

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Evaluation Phase

Have you successfully answered your questions about the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process? Have you learned additional facts about the process? Proceed to Task II for a more complete evaluation of your understanding of the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process.

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Task II

Re-read the "Learning Phase" of Task I then place a check (✓) before each of the following items that are assumptions upon which Pupil-Teacher Planning is based.

1. __ Special background helps pupils to set subject matter goals.
2. __ Pupils should have practice with setting goal achievement criteria.
3. __ Pupil-Teacher Planning can occur successfully regardless of the characteristics of the teacher.
4. __ Goals that are clear and accepted by pupils are easier to attain.
5. __ Goals set by pupils are more likely to be clear and accepted.
6. __ The teacher who uses Pupil-Teacher Planning should be sure that his grading practices evaluate learning of the set goals rather than some other learning.
7. __ Current subject matter areas are usually not flexible enough to facilitate Pupil-Teacher Planning.
8. __ Once set, goals may not be changed without down-grading their attraction.
9. __ When pupils set their own goals, these goals tend to have neutral attraction.
10. __ Authority-prone, dominant teachers tend to hamper pupils from setting goals.
11. __ A pupil will expend more energy in reaching a goal set by a teacher he respects than a goal he sets for himself.
12. __ With practice pupils should become more adept in goal-setting.
13. __ For Pupil-Teacher Planning to be successful, the pupil must be completely free to set his own goals.
14. __ Pupil goal-setting should not be accompanied by a changed grading system.
15. __ Training pupils in a cognitive taxonomy will help the question-asking process.
16. __ Learning goals should have a positive attraction.
17. __ Clear goals tend to yield less learning as the pupil is less inclined to explore alternatives.

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18. __ Pupil stated goals generally have more clarity for the pupil.

19. __ Discovery and exploration are poor ways of giving pupils basic background in a subject matter area because the direct method is more efficient.

20. __ Planning in small groups is a key feature of Pupil-Teacher Planning partly because it increases social access.

Item	Answer	Assumption
1.	T	13
2.	T	22
3.	F	25,11
4.	T	18
5.	F	15
6.	T	26
7.	F	5
8.	F	8
9.	F	8
10.	T	25,11
11.	F	18
12.	T	19
13.	F	17
14.	F	26
15.	T	21
16.	T	7
17.	F	9
18.	T	8
19.	F	14
20.	T	24

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Task III

Read the following outline of the steps used for Pupil-Teacher Planning.

Introductory Phase

Select a unit or units of the course where this approach can be tried. Preferably, the unit should be one which is not totally unfamiliar to the pupils, one which does not have a lot of material that is real difficult to learn, and one which comes early in the year so that the pupil-teacher planning experience can help later on in the year.

Introduce the unit to the pupils and at the same time try to find out how much they already know about it. The purpose of the introduction is to give the pupils a general picture of the subject matter related to the unit and also to sort of set boundary lines which limit how far afield the pupils can go. The most common form of this introduction is in the form of a 20-minute lecture which indicates what the subject matter is all about and some interesting features of the subject matter. The lecture can be followed by an informal discussion which goes back over some points and in which the teacher probes for the current understanding and attitude of the class. In some cases a film, an introductory reading, or an attitude survey can be used to introduce the unit.

Tell the pupils that they will have something to say about what it is they will study in the unit. Also tell them that they will have something to say about how they will study. Tell them that they can do this by deciding on the main study questions for the unit. You might give them a few examples of good and poor study questions: "What is the capital of Spain?" "What is molecular theory?" "Can we take a field trip to Tacoma?" and "When is an adverb not an adverb?" can be given as examples that aren't too great because of being too specific, too broad and difficult, or too unrelated to learning goals. Questions like "What percentage of all species of mammals of the world can be found in Skagit County?" "In what situations would it be nice to be able to know how to multiply fractions?" "How many ways are there to make my left-branching sentences bigger and tougher?" "Should George Wallace run for President?" "How can I find the cube root of something?" would be better.

Illustrate to the class what materials are available for study. Remind them of sources in the room and what related material could be found in them. Mention what coverage the textbook has, if there is a basic textbook. Point out available pamphlets, ditto materials, and magazines. If equipment could be needed, show what is available. Discuss other possibilities with the class and see if they come up with things like the public library, magazines at home, etc.

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Exploration Phase

Divide the class into small groups of 4-5 pupils each. Ask each group to figure out about four or five major study questions for the unit. Tell them that the questions should be what they are interested in and also what they think is important. Pick one pupil to be a recorder and/or sort of a leader for each group.

As an alternative to groupwork, ask pupils to write out questions individually at their own seats (usually groupwork at this stage is to be preferred, however).

After about 15-20 minutes, depending on how you see that things are proceeding, stop the activity and ask some group leaders what they have so far. Point out those questions that seem to be good, but don't hesitate to be critical at this point--critical in the sense of pointing out what questions are too specific, which set impossible goals, etc. For persons who seem lost, encourage them and reiterate, "What is it that you want to know?" or words like that. Some questions can be put on board as examples for others. Then let them resume deciding on questions, whether in small groups or as individuals.

Collect what the groups (or individuals) have worked out. Give them some sort of a prepared assignment until you can get back to the planning. Study what questions the pupils have worked out, eliminate duplication and incoherent statements, and make out a combined list to be duplicated and returned to the pupils. There might be some advantage to having similar questions grouped together under a topic heading.

Planning Phase

Have pupils choose which questions they will work on. This could be done by means of an informal discussion or by means of pupils "signing up" for one to three questions individually. If the pupils sign up individually, you could then put those who signed up for similar questions together into working groups, if you want to have working groups.

Discuss with pupils some of the steps to be taken and the materials to be used to answer some of the questions.

For those questions which are quite common among all pupils, discuss whether or not these should be covered by whole-class activities--lecture, textbook reading and discussion, working problems on blackboard, etc.

For important questions that you think have been overlooked by the pupils and for those questions common to most, arrange some regular, probably teacher-directed instruction designed to provide suitable answers--lectures and so forth. Do this also to present any subject matter that is a prerequisite for learning answers to the other questions.

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Learning Phase

Provide class time that groups or individuals use to search for and consider answers to the study questions they are working on.

Before too much time has been used up in searching for answers, set up with the class a reporting schedule for those individuals or groups who will be reporting back to the whole class. Remember that not all topics do in fact have to be reported to the whole class (in some cases maybe none of them do; it depends upon how valuable the information is to the rest of the pupils). For those that do not, decide what culminating activity will be satisfactory--written report or chart, demonstration of some behavior that has been learned, oral report to teacher only, etc.

Unless this can be done better by separate conferences with individual small groups, have a class discussion about midway through the work sessions which attempts to find out if the major study question should be restated or modified and what are the main stumbling blocks in finding suitable answers thus far.

For the reporting back sessions near the end of the unit, have the class primed to evaluate and criticize the report on the basis of how well they answered the questions they posed.

For groups and individuals that do report to whole class, give them time and instruction on how to give reports as well as what to report.

Evaluation Phase

At the end of the unit evaluate the process with the pupils by means of a discussion (possibly preceded by an anonymous questionnaire about the process). The discussion should consider what kinds of questions work best (rather than is the whole idea any good or not), what steps seem best to take to find some answers, and were the pupils really honest with themselves about what they wanted to find out (rather than merely what they thought the teacher wanted them to learn). The discussion should aim at what could be done to make the whole process work better next time.

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List the five phases of the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process and define each in a paragraph. Check your work carefully.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

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Task IVa[1]

Teach a unit of subject matter using the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process. Answer the following questions as you proceed through this unit.

Introductory Phase

1. What unit have you selected?
2. Are the pupils familiar, in part, with the material in this unit?
3. How did you introduce the unit? Film, lecture, display, etc.
4. Did you explain to the pupils that they would have some say in what the main study questions will be?
5. Did you give examples of good and bad questions?
6. What were your examples?

Exploration Phase

1. What method did you use to get pupils to formulate questions? Small group work or individual seat work?
2. What did the pupils do while you duplicated their questions?

Planning Phase

1. What were some of the questions that pupils "signed up" to work on?
2. Which questions were most popular with the pupils?
3. Were there any questions that were overlooked by the pupils? What were these? How did you present this material to the class?

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[1]If you do not have time for a whole unit, do Task IVb instead (p. 26).

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Learning Phase

1. How did you schedule the time required by the pupils to answer their questions? Worked straight through several class periods, work half a period per day, worked every other day, etc.

2. What was your reporting schedule? Did every pupil report to the class?

3. Did you prepare the pupils in methods of reporting to the class and on how to evaluate each other's reports?

Evaluation Phase

1. Administer the Pupil Opinionnaire or a similar self-made instrument.

2. From the data collected in the Pupil Opinionnaire and from the class discussion, how would you evaluate the effectiveness of the Pupil-Teacher Planning Process?

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PUPIL OPINIONNAIRE

NO NAMES

1. Did you find the manner in which this unit was conducted to be valuable? Yes or No

2. Would you like to do more units in this manner? Yes or No

3. Did you find the questions you answered in working on this unit to be more or less important to you than the rest of the unit? More important or Less important

4. Did you find the question-asking phase to be difficult? Yes or No

5. Did you find the question-asking phase to be confusing? Yes or No Why?

6. How hard did you work on this unit? Check one.

___ Much harder than usual
___ A little harder than usual
___ As hard as usual
___ Not as hard as usual
___ Hardly worked at all compared with usual

7. Which part of this unit was most helpful to you?

8. Which part of this unit was least helpful to you?

9. What suggestions do you have for improving this unit?

10. What suggestions do you have for future units of study?

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Task IVb

If you do not have the time or for some other reason cannot use Pupil-Teacher Planning with an entire unit, then use it with a lesson or group of lessons. Apply the questions as in Task IVa, substituting "lesson" for "unit." An informal pupil opinion poll may serve the same purpose as the Pupil Opinionnaire. Be sure and go through all of the phases of Pupil-Teacher Planning in this practical setting so as to have some experience with actual field implementation.